

IN THE CLAIMS

Kindly amend claim 1 as follows:

- B<sub>1</sub>
1. (AMENDED) A method of screening for the presence of a cancer cell, comprising:
    - a. obtaining a cell from a biological sample comprising a cell from a subject, wherein the sample is enriched for circulating epithelial cells by contacting the sample with an agent that binds with the epithelial cells;
    - b. contacting the cell with a probe capable of hybridizing to a nucleic acid of the cell; and
    - c. detecting the hybridization pattern of the probe, whereby the hybridization pattern can distinguish a non-cancer cell from a cancer cell, thereby screening for the presence of a cancer cell.

Kindly cancel claims 3-6.

Kindly amend claim 7 as follows:

- B<sub>2</sub>
7. (AMENDED) The method of claim 1, wherein the enrichment of the sample for circulating epithelial cells is achieved by cytokeratin screening.

Kindly amend claim 15 as follows:

- B<sub>3</sub>
15. (AMENDED) A method of determining the status of a cancer comprising:
    - a. obtaining a biological sample containing a cell from a patient diagnosed with cancer;
    - b. enriching the sample for circulating epithelial cells by contacting the sample with an agent that binds with the epithelial cells;

- B3
- c. contacting the cell in the enriched sample with a probe capable of hybridizing to nucleic acid of the cell;
  - d. detecting the hybridization pattern of the probe, whereby the hybridization pattern can distinguish a non-cancer cell from a cancer cell;
  - e. determining the amount of cancer cells in the enriched sample and correlating the amount of cancer cells in the enriched sample with a stage of cancer, thereby determining the status of the cancer.
- 

Kindly amend claim 17 as follows:

- B4
17. (AMENDED) A method of determining the progression of a cancer comprising:
- a. obtaining a biological sample containing a cell at a first time point from a patient diagnosed with cancer and obtaining a biological sample containing a cell from the patient at a second time point;
  - b. enriching the first and second samples for circulating epithelial cells by contacting the samples with an agent that binds with the epithelial cells;
  - c. contacting the cell in the first enriched sample and the cell in the second enriched sample with a probe capable of hybridizing to nucleic acid of the cell;
  - d. detecting the hybridization pattern of the probe, whereby the hybridization pattern can distinguish a non-cancer cell from a cancer cell;
  - e. determining the amount of cancer cells in both the first enriched sample and the second enriched sample; and
  - f. comparing the amount of cancer cells in both the first enriched sample and the second enriched sample, whereby the relative amount of cancer cells in the first enriched sample as compared with the second enriched sample may be correlated with the progression of cancer, thereby determining the progression of the cancer.
-

Kindly amend claim 19 as follows:

---

- B5
19. (AMENDED) A method of determining the effectiveness of an anti-cancer treatment comprising:
- a. obtaining a biological sample containing a cell from a patient that has been administered an anti-cancer treatment;
  - b. enriching the sample for circulating epithelial cells by contacting the sample with an agent that binds with the epithelial cells;
  - c. contacting the cell in the enriched sample with a probe capable of hybridizing to nucleic acid of the cell;
  - d. detecting the hybridization pattern of the probe, whereby the hybridization pattern can distinguish a non-cancer cell from a cancer cell;
  - e. determining the amount of cancer cells in the enriched sample and correlating the amount of cancer cells in the sample with the effectiveness of the anti-cancer treatment, thereby determining the effectiveness of an anti-cancer treatment.
20. A method of determining the effectiveness of an anti-cancer treatment comprising:
- a. obtaining a biological sample containing a cell from a patient that has been administered an anti-cancer treatment;
  - b. contacting the cell in the sample with a probe under conditions capable of forming a complex with an antigen of the cell;
  - c. detecting the complex, whereby detecting the complex can distinguish a non-cancer cell from a cancer cell;
  - d. determining the amount of cancer cells in the sample and correlating the amount of cancer cells in the sample with the effectiveness of the anti-cancer treatment, thereby determining the effectiveness of an anti-cancer treatment.
-